

## DECISION FRAMEWORK STUDENT MOBILITY 2020-2021

Purpose document: to provide additional reference points for credit mobility – and study programmes in making a decision regarding the continuation, postponement or cancellation of types of student mobility for 2020-2021. It has been updated to also account for the second semester of 2020-2021 and include additional clarifications on frequently asked questions.

Types of mobility for which this framework should be used by the credit mobility – and degree programme:

- A. Mobility for **coursework** is in most cases for a period of a semester; students incoming are joining our educational programmes for a semester, students outgoing leave for a study of a semester. This type of mobility is an optional part of the curriculum but based on course packages.
- B. Mobility regarding **outgoing internships and graduation projects** is mostly part of the regular curriculum of the study programmes. Students considering an internship or project abroad have already been advised by their programmes to consider a 'plan B' (e.g. project/internship in the Netherlands)
- C. Mobility regarding **incoming internships (placements) and lab-projects** are, always judged by the research chair on a case to case basis and is only allowed if the research chair approves on having the student(s) in. There might be options for other dates.
- D. A number of UT MSc programs have so-called **3+2 contracts** with international partners, where students are registered as exchange students in the first year of the programme at UT. There are also joint and double degree programmes that include obligatory mobility.
- E. Mobility for **study-trips** are for a short period but are mostly embedded in a programme. Some with courses at home, and EC's awarded.
- F. Outgoing mobility for **summerschools** are for a short period and are by definition extra-curricular.

Core principles:

- Prioritise health, safety and security of the student at all times.
- The decision of continuation, postponement or cancellation of mobility should minimize the student's possible delay in official study programme planning.
- For destinations with a Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs travel advice<sup>1</sup> code orange and red no outgoing mobility is allowed, meaning that the student will receive no support financial or otherwise from the UT in possible repatriation scenarios.

How to use this document: Relevant considerations for deciding on the continuation, postponement or cancellation of mobility have been split into outgoing and incoming mobility. It is an integrated framework, that will require the combined knowledge of Exchange Coordinators, Internship Coordinators, minor coordinators, study advisors and examination boards. Moreover, country coordinators or FAINCO's might provide additional insights. Should additional advice after using this framework be warranted, the study programme can, of course, consult CES-SOIR.

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<sup>1</sup> Yellow: safety risks, the local government has made restricting measures for public life that could affect travelers.

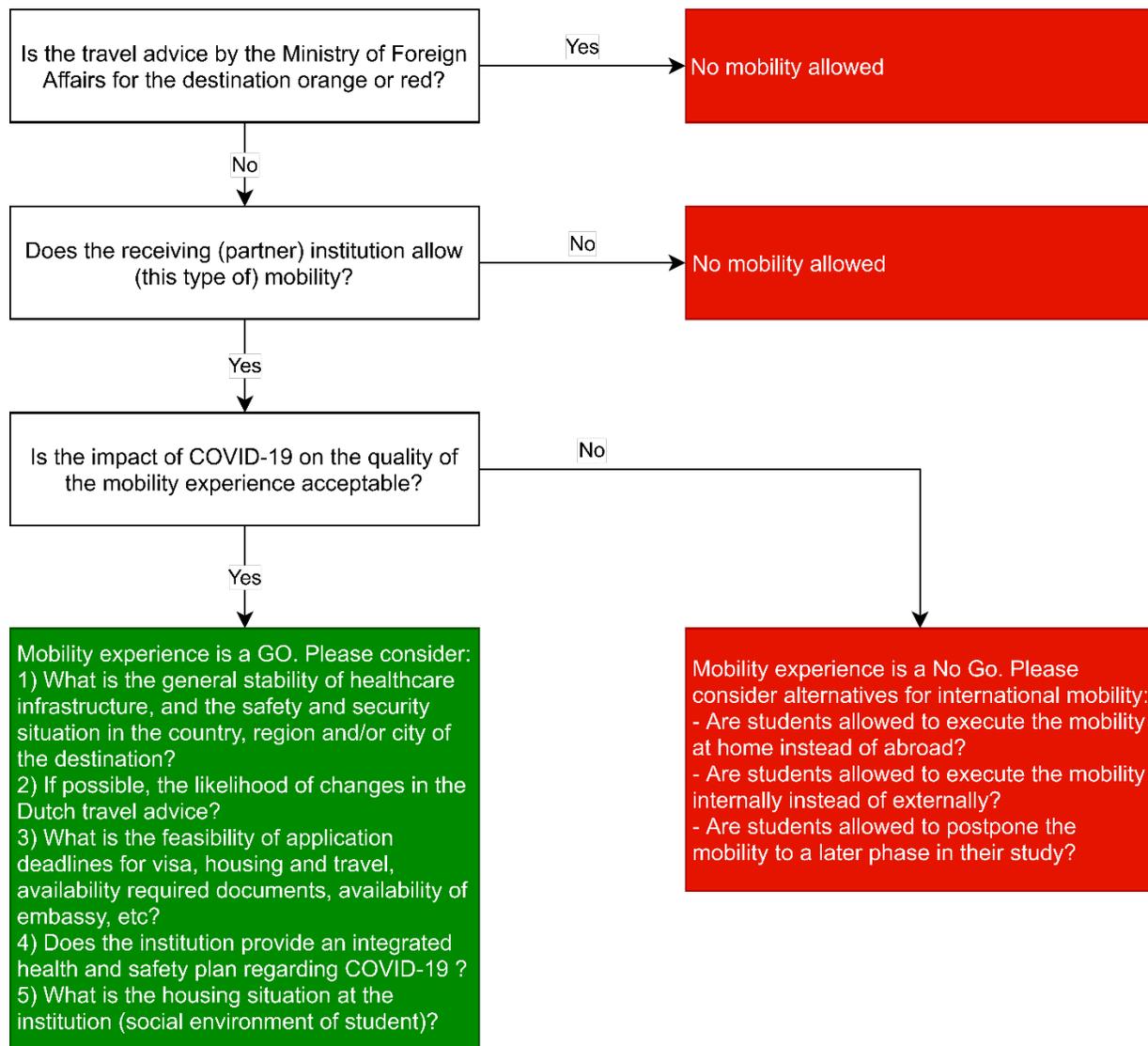
Orange: severe safety risks, only necessary travel. The local government has taken restricting measures for public life that will affect travellers, including travel restrictions. The number of coronavirus infected might be large.

Red: very severe safety risks that may lead to life threatening situations. Don't travel. The local government has taken far reaching measures and the number of coronavirus infected is high. Source: Letter by Minister of Foreign Affairs to Tweede Kamer.

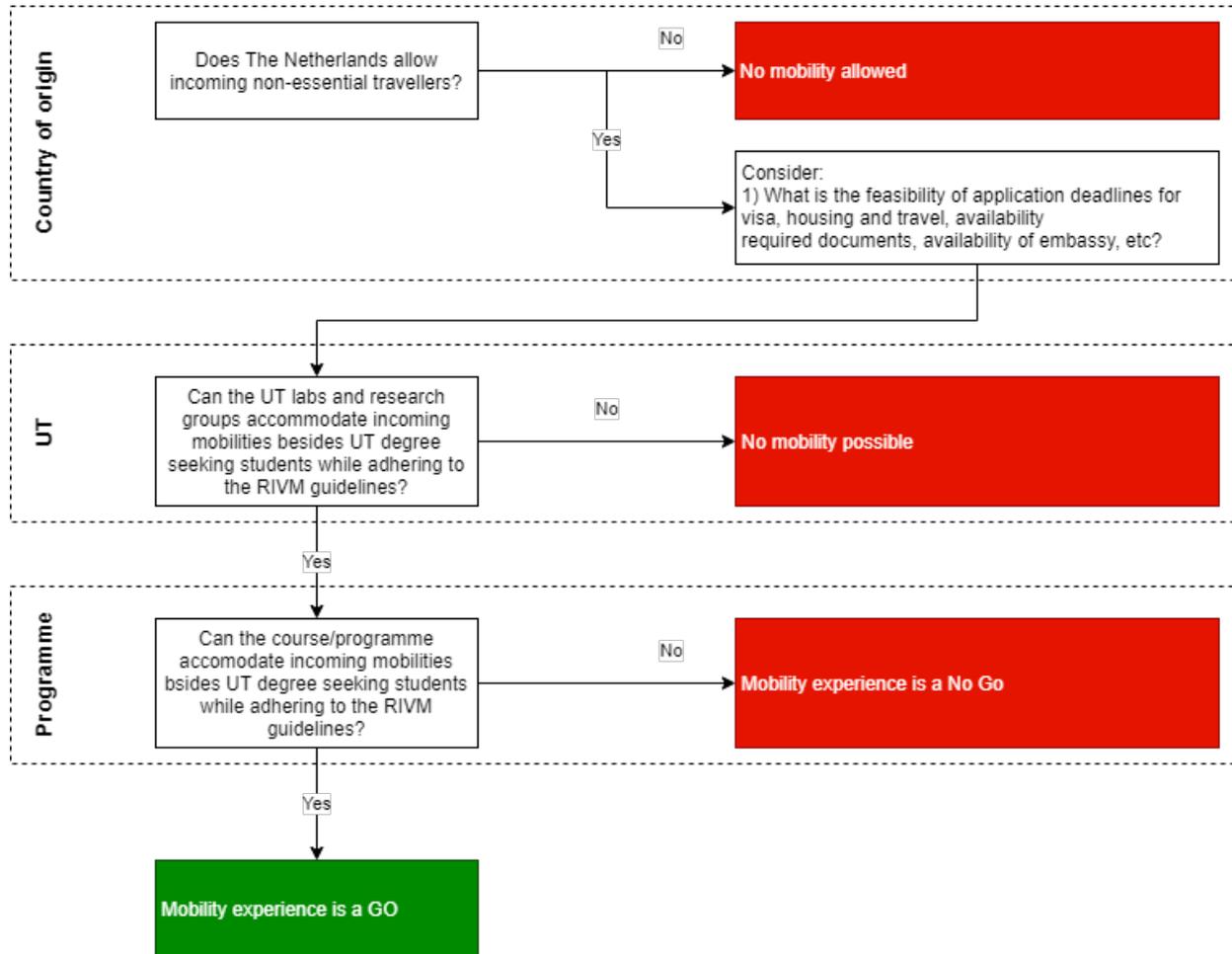
## IN ALL CASES

1. To ensure full transparency actively inform the students on safety and risks regarding international travel, regardless of the circumstances at the moment of communicating the programme's decision.
2. No scholarships for outgoing mobility are attributed to students travelling to countries labelled orange or red as indicated by the Travel Advice of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs prior to travel of the student for the purpose of study.
3. Make a final decision at the latest 10 working days prior to departure date (outgoing student) or arrival date (incoming student) to ensure student is timely informed and has time to make alternative arrangements if needed.

## OUTGOING



# INCOMING



## FAQ

### 1. WHAT IS THE DUTY OF CARE OF THE UT AND THE ROLE OF THE STUDENT REGARDING MOBILITY?

The university has a duty of care towards students that travel abroad under the institution's responsibility. This responsibility originates from approving the programme elements that student will follow abroad and by allowing that to be part of the educational programme. The duty of care is an obligation of effort (not result) but is not precisely defined. The duty of care can be at a central level, but also at a faculty and programme level. Elements that are part of this effort are at least:

1. Actively inventory the health and safety risks associated with following a study programme part abroad.
2. Take preventive actions to ensure the safety and/or health of the student can reasonably be safeguarded. Examples include instructing the student on all dangers and risks, but also (advising the student on) taking out additional insurances.
3. Monitor the situation and keep in contact with the student.
4. Actively intervene when the safety and/or health of the student can no longer be safeguarded. This could mean recalling the student. In that case it is important to be clear on who carries the costs of repatriation.

Not fulfilling this duty of care, can mean that university is held accountable for damage, costs or losses by the student.

At the University of Twente:

- Travel for the UT students and staff has never been considered necessary by the UT (this stance predates the coronavirus). Hence, for destinations with a Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs travel advice<sup>2</sup> code orange and red no permission for outgoing mobility will be granted.
- Outgoing students are registered in Mobility Online. When students have travelled to an area that is labelled green or yellow, but that changes to an orange or red travel advice *during* their stay the regular [Calamity Protocol](#) takes into affect and the UT offers support. If the student in this situation decides to remain in the now orange/or red labelled area, then that is at their own risk and this will be documented as such.
- The government will not organise repatriation flights in case of second wave of Covid-19. With the initial wave, travellers were completely blindsided and the government offered aid. The UT assisted in repatriation and provided financial support upon explicit call back. Now people are aware of the risk. This means that when the advice turns to orange or red, students abroad have to arrange their own travel back to the Netherlands. The costs for this are for the student.

This is the usual practice. However, due to corona, we inform students of increased practical and financial risks as the possibility of changing travel advice is more likely due to current circumstances. As practical and financial aid of the UT only goes so far, students should be aware of the increased likelihood of additional costs and the limitation of the role of the UT when it comes to support.

*Points of attention for implementation:*

*At least in the internship approval process, it was made clear that the UT supervisor (an examiner appointed by the examination board) approves the student's proposal based on the content of the proposal – regardless of the destination of the internship. Though the student is informed of the risks of travelling abroad, nowhere during the process the permission is retracted if the destination is labelled orange or red. To implement the UT stance on orange and red, this needs to be added to the process, preferably in a uniform way at the central level. Follow-up discussion will be organized by the authors.*

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## 2. WHY CAN'T A STUDENT GO TO A DESTINATION IF THE ONLY REASON FOR THE ORANGE TRAVEL ADVICE IS THE QUARANTINE RESTRICTION?

Until 15<sup>th</sup> of June the whole world was labelled orange. It was decided that from the 15<sup>th</sup> of June touristic travel (code yellow) could be considered for the EU/EFTA/VK. Scaling down to yellow advice was done on 4 criteria: 1) whether Dutch tourists are welcome; 2) whether there are quarantine measures for inbound Dutch travellers; 3) whether free travel to and within the country was possible; and 4) whether the health risks for Dutch travellers are at a reasonable level as judged by the RIVM. When an orange advice is maintained at least one of these criteria is not met. Often this can be found on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If the advice is orange due to quarantine restrictions for inbound travellers, students might not consider this an insurmountable reason to cancel their outgoing mobility. However, considering:

- Insurances do not differentiate between the reasons a destination is labelled orange. They do not cover (at all or only in part) damages and medical costs related to coronavirus (such as medical bills) when travelling in/to a country with orange travel advice. The financial risk is thus much larger.
- Workload will increase per student if the reason for the orange advice is to be considered in the decision.
- Differentiating in the reasons for an orange travel advice risks preferential treatment.
- Receiving partner institutions do not always offer in case of a quarantine obligation. Our students often lack the social network at their destination upon arrival, making it nearly impossible to adhere to quarantine obligation when no support by the receiving institution is available. Investigating the true situation adds to the workload of UT staff tasked with advising students on their mobility.
- Receiving partner institutions do not always guarantee the availability of online alternatives or continuation of the mobility in case of new local restrictive measures or a lockdown. This could still lead to study delay. Again, investigating the true situation adds to the workload of UT staff tasked with advising students on their mobility.

Hence, we maintain that corona-related orange travel advice - regardless of the reason - is a No Go for outgoing student mobility.

## 3. HOW DO WE HANDLE A SUDDEN CHANGE OF THE TRAVEL ADVICE TO ORANGE/RED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS DEVELOPMENTS?

### A. Outgoing student has yet to travel to destination

Considering the answer to the previous question: if the student has yet to leave and the destination has received an orange travel advice, the mobility cannot proceed. Scholarships will not be granted (or revoked if previously granted when destination was yellow). For Erasmus+, please be aware that if the advice is orange at the moment of departure, no appeal to the force majeure can be made. Last-minute changes are unfortunately part of the world we are faced with. Students have been advised about the increased risks, including higher costs and lack of refunds for last-minute cancellations.

### B. Student is at destination

Outgoing students that are already at their destination when the travel advice is changed to code orange or red, the student will get to keep his/her scholarship (force majeure). The student will be approached as described in the Calamity Protocol. Though it must be made clear that this calamity Protocol was not written with a global pandemic in mind: the 2 volunteers cannot manage all corona-related changes. Hence, the duty of care (see question 1) the university has, is not only at a central, but also at a faculty or even programme level.

According to the protocol students will actively be asked by the UT whether they wish to stay or leave, and the student's decision is recorded. If the student decides to stay, he/she is made aware of his/her responsibilities and increased risks. If the student prefers to leave, the UT will offer support in making the necessary arrangements. Upon arrival at home, the student is asked to adhere to the 10-day

self-quarantine obligation. Exceptions for this obligation can be found at: <https://www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19/tackling-new-coronavirus-in-the-netherlands/travel-and-holidays/self-quarantine>. Students can find more information on self-quarantine at: <https://su.utwente.nl/en/Kick-In/guidelines/preventive-self-quarantine/>

#### C. Outgoing student is en route

For students that are en route, changes in the travel advice are handled as if the student had already arrived on the destination. This means that the students get to decide if he/she will continue to his/her destination or return to the Netherlands.

## 4. WHAT DOES THE UT TRAVEL INSURANCE COVER (RELATED TO THE CORONAVIRUS)?

The [General Conditions](#) explain what is covered by the UT travel insurance. [This website](#) provides a general cover overview for students, but the General Conditions give detailed explanations. In short, it covers the following:

- Costs related to an accident causing death or permanent disability (article 5-10)
- A number of very specified costs (article 11)
- Medical casts which are not covered by primary medical aid insurance (article 12)
- Costs related to unforeseen damage of baggage (article 13-15) and damage to lodgings (article 16)

#### **Related to coronavirus this implies:**

- Please be aware that there is also no right of payment if the loss or damage results from circumstances which were to be expected at the beginning of the journey or at least could reasonable have been expected.
- Traveling to orange areas is only possible for essential travel with approval by the UT. It is required to substantiate this necessity. Again: the UT stance is that staff and student travel is never essential.
- Costs for repatriation and evacuation are not covered if they relate to the coronavirus pandemic. Neither costs for a longer stay if the destination goes into lockdown nor costs related to quarantine measure are covered by the insurance.
- Claims related to the Coronavirus will be judged based on the specific circumstances. There might be reasons to not compensate damages, hence coverage cannot be guaranteed upfront. What is considered in the evaluation of the claim is:
  - o The necessity of the trip compared the medical risks that involved in the trip due to the coronavirus.
  - o Are sufficient measures taken to prevent or minimize these medical risks.
  - o Whether the traveller adhered to all rules of the (local) government and organisations.